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dryest places. Its root is used by the Spaniards as a substitute for soap in washing their garments. Among the rocks on dry hills, to the south of the piñons, we detected *Agave Pringlei*, Engelm. (ined.), in bloom July 28, 1883, and found the fibre of its long and slender leaves to be preferred by the Indians, for making ropes and other articles, to that of the more abundant *A. deserti*. The root, leaves and flower-stalk of both species are, after being roasted, eaten by the Indians, who also asserted that they ate the golden lichen, *Evernia vulpina*, which grows in small quantities, especially on dead manzanitas, among these mountains.

Among the large pines or piñons (*Pinus Jeffreyi*?), to the south of the piñons, we found the pretty *Ivesia Baileyi*, Watson, in the crevices of the granite boulders that form the immense rocky ridges through this district; and, at the base of these rocks, were many pretty plants, among them the familiar *Aquilegia truncata* and *Pteris aquilina*, and also *Geranium cæspitosum*, *Arenaria alsinoides*, Willd., *Eriogonum Parishii*, *Galium pubens* and *angustifolium*, etc., and on the grassy plains or meadows, between the stretches of pine forest, were *Verbena littoralis*, HBK., *Cnicus Drummondii*, var. *acaulescens*, *Eriogonum foliolosum*, Wats., *n. sp.*, and a variety of *Horkelia Californica*. On little pools or lagoons we found *Potamogeton natans*, L., and *Polygonum Hartwrightii*, Gray.

San Diego, Cal.

C. R. ORCUTT.

**Autumn Foliage.**—A comparison of notes on the local condition of foliage, made on October 5th, with similar notes of October 1st, 1882, shows an interesting difference. This is so marked in many cases that it is worthy of note, especially since the opinion has gained some ground among botanists that the appearance and fall of the leaves occur at nearly the same dates each year. From my notes it appears that the season, as regards foliage, is at least ten days later this year than last. A few species, the black and red cherries, the apple, pear, peach and plum are at about the same stage. The difference appears slightly in the golden willow, sugar-maple and silky cornel; to a marked degree in the ash, chestnut, shagbark, American and slippery elms, all the oaks (eight species), and the fox-grape, while it is very decided in the flowering dogwood, beech and pignut. The three last were perfectly fresh and green on the above date, while my notes for 1882 describe them as largely brown and dead at that time.

Of course the explanation of this difference is to be found in meteorological conditions, which I am able to give for both years as follows:

	AUGUST.			SEPTEMBER.		
	Temp.	Rel. Humidity.	Rain.	Temp.	Rel. Humidity.	Rain.
1882. . . .	67.3°	66.1	0.99	63.7°	77.2	16.56
1883. . . .	66.3°	69.2	2.91	59.9°	71.0	2.27

The ash and sugar-maple have borne an unusual abundance of fruit this season throughout all this region (Orange County, N. Y.) Has anyone noticed a similar fertility elsewhere?

Mountainville, N. Y.

W. E. STONE.

### Botanical Notes.

*Motion of Stamens in Centaurea.*—At a recent meeting of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences, Mr. Meehan called attention to fresh specimens of the flowers of *Centaurea Americana*, a native of Texas, which had been sent to him from Newport, accompanied by a letter from Miss Mary Powell, in which she describes a peculiar motion of the stamens. After describing and illustrating the structure of the flower in detail, the speaker remarked that if the point of the united stamens be touched, the pollen will begin to overflow and the pistil appear above the mass. If the pistil be now touched, the entire floret bends from side to side or makes a circular motion. Sometimes the motion will be communicated to other florets, which may bend in different directions. The *Centaurea* is closely allied to the thistles, and Mr. Meehan had found in all the species of the latter which he had examined the same kind of motion, although in our common field thistle it is quite feeble.

The irritability of the anthers had been partially described by Sachs and other German botanists, although none of them alludes to a movement of the entire floret. They believe the movement to be due to contractility, but the speaker suggested that some other mechanism is probably involved, as the motion is only to be observed when the pollen is present. If the latter be all brushed off the motion ceases.

**Proceedings of the Torrey Club.**—The regular meeting of the Club was held at Columbia College, Tuesday evening, April 10th. In the absence of the presiding officers, Mr. B. F. Braman occupied the chair. There were twenty-six persons present.

*Field Committee.*—The chairman appointed Messrs. Day, Rudkin and Hollick a committee on field excursions for the current year.

The Rev. A. B. Hervey, on invitation of the chair, made some remarks on the study of algæ.

Four persons were elected active members.

At the regular meeting held Tuesday evening, May 8th, the President occupied the chair and twenty-one persons were present.

Mr. Braman exhibited specimens of *Pistia spathulata*, Mx., from Florida. The President remarked that fossil specimens of this genus were found in the cretaceous rocks of Wyoming.

Mr. Britton showed specimens *Veronica hederæfolia*, L., and *Lithospermum arvense*, L., from a new locality, Kingsbridge, N. Y.

Mr. Bicknell showed specimens of *Carex Pennsylvanica*, Lam., and of *C. varia*, Muhl., which closely resembles it, and pointed out an important difference by which they may be distinguished, this being the presence in *C. Pennsylvanica* of long, spreading rootstocks by means of which plants covering a considerable area are connected. In *C. varia* these are not to be found.

One person was elected an active member.